



# Creating a Family Guidebook

Your Family Guidebook should clearly explain program policies and procedures and help families understand how to be involved in the program. Key components of a Family Guidebook include:

- An introduction to your program
  - Program history
  - Goals and objectives
  - A welcome from the director
- Directory of staff members
  - Include pictures
  - Have short bios
  - History in the program and working with youth
- Calendar of events
  - Special events
  - Holidays
  - Early or late days
- Program rules and expectations
  - Rules for different program locations (outside, bus, classrooms, etc.)
  - Responsibilities of youth in the program
  - Consequences for not following rules and procedures
  - Rewards for positive behavior
- Policies and procedures
  - Guidelines for food served and allowed in the program
  - Arrival and dismissal
  - Medication policies
  - Telephone use by children
  - Bringing items from home into the program
- Academic expectations
  - Amount of homework done in the program
  - Sharing of grades and state test information
  - How families can help
- Involvement opportunities and policies
  - Family involvement philosophy
  - Existing and potential opportunities for involvement
  - Ways to share concerns and ideas

## Other Ideas:

- Leave areas such as “Responsibilities of youth” and “Potential opportunities for involvement” blank to allow youth and families to fill them in once they are decided.
- Include a table of contents or quick reference guide that helps families get to specific pages fast.
- Include a history of past family involvement in the program
- Include your guidebook or parts of it. on your program website
- Leave blank sections where families can fill in updated information such as youth grades and progress reports and family volunteer hours or points.